

According to the most recent Gallup Poll, 66 percent of Americans think the Democrats' massive government takeover of health care would make things worse or make no difference for themselves and their families.

I believe we have started down a path of total government takeover of our health care system at a cost of almost \$1 trillion now, and untold costs to be paid later in taxes, fines and loss of care. As a health care professional, my evaluation of the measure is that it will decrease access to health care, increase costs, put a bureaucrat between you and your physician and place quality care as an afterthought.

I fear the impact on our rural hospitals and I fear this measure puts us on a path of no return, which will be spoken about in depressing and critical terms for decades to come.

One hundred and thirty economists wrote to the President March 18th to tell him that the Health Care bill is a job-killer. Speaker of the House John Boehner released the contents of that letter.

They wrote: "The bill raises taxes by almost \$500 billion over ten years. A significant portion of these tax increases will fall on small business owners, reducing capital and limiting economic growth and hiring."

And they wrote: "The bill will impose a tax of \$2000 per employee on employers with more than 50 employees that do not provide health insurance. The bill will also tax employers that offer health coverage deemed 'unaffordable' by the government. These new taxes on employers will reduce employment or be passed on to workers in the form of lower wages or reduced hours."

It doesn't take much deduction to figure out that if you have 49 employees now, you will never hire the 50th employee. Why would you bring that burden on your business?

Those with 53 or 54 employees will potentially fire four or five employees in order to go below the mandate.

The economists concluded, "The new and higher taxes on America's small businesses and workers included in the bill are detrimental to job creation and economic growth, especially now given the fragile state of the economy."

But the bill will create jobs—for the tax collector. Some 16,500 people will be hired as auditors, agents and other employees needed by the Internal Revenue Service to collect the hundreds of billions in new taxes. The cost of enforcement is estimated to be between \$5 and \$10 billion over 10 years and it is not paid for in the bill.

The wealthier American people will be taxed to subsidize those who cannot afford their health care. And few will be able to afford health care as the mandates take shape and insurance companies are unable to make a profit under the new rules. The eventual result will be rationing of care.

Rural hospitals already suffer from low reimbursement rates under Medicare and Medicaid. Those rates are eighty to ninety cents for one dollar of health care value in Medicare and forty to sixty cents for one dollar of health care value in Medicaid. When the federal government controls the private health care industry as well, no one will be paid the full cost of medical care.

The bill cuts more than \$200 billion from the Medicare Advantage program.

Rural hospitals now get by with a one to three percent profit per year. If that evaporates, small hospitals will close.

Republicans have been vocal in their support of the need to fix our health care system. We have dozens of bills including the "Putting Patients First Act"—a bill I have co-sponsored. It allows purchase of health care across state lines, deals with pre-existing conditions and allows parents to keep their children on their health care plans until age 26. It does all of this without taxes or cuts in Medicare.

We could have agreed on a number of issues. Instead, we have more than 3,000 pages of Senate bill, reconciliation package and manager's amendment that we will be unfolding and deciphering for years to come. The undiscovered, perhaps unintended, consequences will be continuing surprises.

For example, according to The Wall Street Journal, Caterpillar Inc. announced that the bill will increase its health-care costs by \$100 million in the first year—no doubt giving it, and many other American companies, another reason to move American jobs to foreign countries. I fear this is the tip of the iceberg.

WRESTLEMANIA COMES TO GLENDALE/PHOENIX

HON. ED PASTOR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 23, 2010

Mr. PASTOR of Arizona. Madam Speaker, I rise today to welcome WWE and WrestleMania XXVI (26) to Glendale's University of Phoenix Stadium on Sunday, March 28, 2010. WWE will take over the greater Glendale/Phoenix area during WrestleMania Week from March 24–March 29, 2010.

We are very pleased to welcome the 70,000 fans from 26 countries, all 50 states, and more than 130 members of the international media who will descend upon the Valley of the Sun.

We welcome WrestleMania, the WWE, and their fans because they will experience the culture of our city, the great weather, and have the opportunity to patronize our wonderful businesses. For the last three years, WrestleMania has averaged nearly \$50 million in new economic impact into the local economy. We are happy to have this investment coming to the Glendale and Phoenix regions.

In addition to WrestleMania, WWE has brought a variety of wonderful community activities: WrestleMania Axxess—WWE's interactive fan festival; WrestleMania Art—fund-raiser benefitting the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Arizona and Phoenix Children's Hospital; the finals of the WWE's international literacy program, WrestleMania Reading Challenge; a WrestleMania Pro-Am Golf Tournament with our beloved Arizona Cardinals; the WWE Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony; and WWE's Monday Night Raw.

WrestleMania XXVI will be televised to a global pay-per-view audience in 75 countries.

WrestleMania is truly a family-friendly event that creates an atmosphere where families from around the world can join together to celebrate their love for WWE and their favorite "Superstars" and "Divas."

Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the WWE and its fans for choosing to come to Glendale and Phoenix and wish them a wonderful Arizona stay.

ENSURING THAT AMERICAN FAMILIES AND SMALL BUSINESSES RECEIVE THE FULL BENEFITS OF COMPETITION IN HEALTH CARE AND HEALTH INSURANCE REFORM

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 23, 2010

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, Sunday night, Congress voted to affirm the right of all Americans to quality health care at affordable cost, by fixing our country's broken health insurance marketplace. This is an effort that I and others have been working on for decades, and while the bill does not yet achieve everything we have sought, it is a monumental step forward, of which those who voted to take it, in the face of the relentless campaign of disinformation bankrolled by its opponents, can all be rightly proud.

Now, as this historic effort moves from the legislative arena to implementation, I would like to say a few words, as Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, about the critical role for competition in making the health care insurance marketplace work effectively to serve consumers and promote prosperity—and the assistance that the federal antitrust enforcement agencies can and should provide in keeping competition considerations at the forefront.

In implementing this comprehensive legislation, the Department of Health and Human Services will be called upon, as will other federal agencies, and the States, to make assessments in a variety of contexts as to whether the marketplace is functioning properly, or whether abuses are occurring. In making these assessments, and in deciding on appropriate steps to address any abuses or dysfunction, the federal agencies and the States can benefit greatly from competitive analysis provided by our federal antitrust agencies, the Department of Justice's Antitrust Division and the Federal Trade Commission. I would urge them to make full use of this assistance.

Both the Antitrust Division and the FTC have a long history of advising other federal agencies, as well as State legislatures and agencies, on ways to formulate policies and make regulatory decisions consistent with maintaining and promoting healthy competitive market incentives. In addition to formal advice, generally in the form of public comments, which both federal agencies provide in areas in which they have developed expertise, the Antitrust Division routinely provides informal guidance to other federal agencies through interagency consultation and through OMB-supervised interagency review and comment.

While the advice of the two antitrust enforcement agencies is non-binding, it is generally given substantial weight. The two agencies are widely recognized as having developed, in the course of antitrust investigations and enforcement actions over many decades, unmatched experience and expertise in analyzing markets for how competition is working, or not working. They can assess whether lack of effective competition is behind a problem, or is worsening it, and if it is, can recommend ways to unblock competition as part of any regulatory response.